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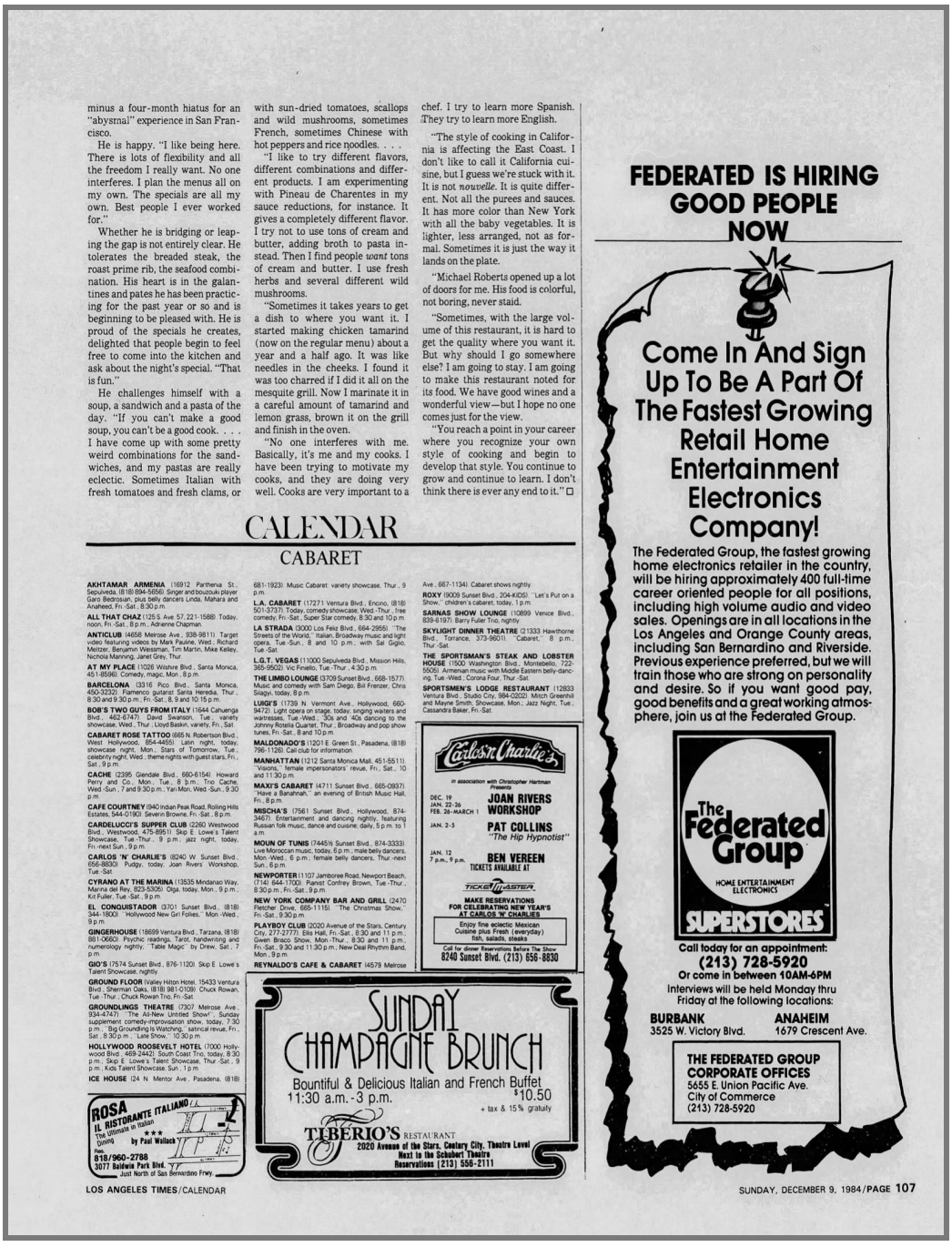

minus a four-month hiatus for an "abysmal" experience in San Francisco.

He is happy. "I like being here. There is lots of flexibility and all the freedom I really want. No one interferes. I plan the menus all on my own. The specials are all my own. Best people I ever worked for."

Whether he is bridging or leaping the gap is not entirely clear. He tolerates the breaded steak, the roast prime rib, the seafood combination. His heart is in the galantines and pates he has been practicing for the past year or so and is beginning to be pleased with. He is proud of the specials he creates, delighted that people begin to feel free to come into the kitchen and ask about the night's special. "That is fun."

He challenges himself with a soup, a sandwich and a pasta of the day. "If you can't make a good soup, you can't be a good cook. . . . I have come up with some pretty weird combinations for the sandwiches, and my pastas are really eclectic. Sometimes Italian with fresh tomatoes and fresh clams, or with sun-dried tomatoes, scallops and wild mushrooms, sometimes French, sometimes Chinese with hot peppers and rice noodles. . . .

"I like to try different flavors, different combinations and different products. I am experimenting with Pineau de Charentes in my sauce reductions, for instance. It gives a completely different flavor. I try not to use tons of cream and butter, adding broth to pasta instead. Then I find people *want* tons of cream and butter. I use fresh herbs and several different wild mushrooms.

"Sometimes it takes years to get a dish to where you want it. I started making chicken tamarind (now on the regular menu) about a year and a half ago. It was like needles in the cheeks. I found it was too charred if I did it all on the mesquite grill. Now I marinate it in a careful amount of tamarind and lemon grass, brown it on the grill and finish in the oven.

"No one interferes with me. Basically, it's me and my cooks. I have been trying to motivate my cooks, and they are doing very well. Cooks are very important to a chef. I try to learn more Spanish. They try to learn more English.

"The style of cooking in California is affecting the East Coast. I don't like to call it California cuisine, but I guess we're stuck with it. It is not *nouvelle*. It is quite different. Not all the purees and sauces. It has more color than New York with all the baby vegetables. It is lighter, less arranged, not as formal. Sometimes it is just the way it lands on the plate.

"Michael Roberts opened up a lot of doors for me. His food is colorful, not boring, never staid.

"Sometimes, with the large volume of this restaurant, it is hard to get the quality where you want it. But why should I go somewhere else? I am going to stay. I am going to make this restaurant noted for its food. We have good wines and a wonderful view—but I hope no one comes just for the view.

"You reach a point in your career where you recognize your own style of cooking and begin to develop that style. You continue to grow and continue to learn. I don't think there is ever any end to it." □

CALENDAR

CABARET

AKHTAMAR ARMENIA (16912 Parthenia St., Sepulveda, (818) 894-5656) Singer and bouzouki player Garo Bedrosian, plus belly dancers Linda, Mahar'a and Anaheed. Fri.-Sat., 8:30 p.m.

ALL THAT CHAZ (125 S. Ave. 57, 221-1588) Today, noon, Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m., Adrienne Chapman.

ANTICLUB (4658 Melrose Ave., 938-9811) Target video featuring videos by Mark Pauline, Wed., Richard Meltzer, Benjamin Weissman, Tim Martin, Mike Kelley, Nichola Manning, Janet Grey, Thur.

AT MY PLACE (1026 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 451-8596) Comedy, magic, Mon., 8 p.m.

BARCELONA (3316 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, 450-3232) Flamenco guitarist Santa Heredia, Thur., 8:30 and 9:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 8, 9 and 10:15 p.m.

BOB'S TWO GUYS FROM ITALY (1644 Cahuenga Blvd., 462-6747) David Swanson, Tue., variety showcase, Wed., Thur.; Lloyd Baskin, variety, Fri.-Sat.

CABARET ROSE TATTOO (665 N. Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, 854-4455) Latin night, today; showcase night, Mon.; Stars of Tomorrow, Tue.; celebrity night, Wed.; theme nights with guest stars, Fri.-Sat., 9 p.m.

CACHE (2395 Glendale Blvd., 660-6154) Howard Perry and Co., Mon.-Tue., 8 p.m.; Trio Cache, Wed.-Sun., 7 and 9:30 p.m.; Yan Mon., Wed.-Sun., 9:30 p.m.

CAFE COURTNEY (940 Indian Peak Road, Rolling Hills Estates, 544-0190) Severin Browne, Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.

CARDELUCCI'S SUPPER CLUB (2260 Westwood Blvd., Westwood, 475-8951) Skip E. Lowe's Talent Showcase, Tue.-Thur., 9 p.m., jazz night, today, Fri.-next Sun., 9 p.m.

CARLOS 'N' CHARLIE'S (8240 W. Sunset Blvd., 656-8830) Pudgy, today; Joan Rivers Workshop, Tue.-Sat.

CYRANO AT THE MARINA (13535 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey, 823-5305) Olga, today, Mon., 9 p.m.; Kit Fuller, Tue.-Sat., 9 p.m.

EL CONQUISTADOR (3701 Sunset Blvd., (818) 344-1800) "Hollywood New Gri Follies," Mon.-Wed., 9 p.m.

GINGERHOUSE (18699 Ventura Blvd., Tarzana, (818) 881-0660) Psychic readings, Tarot, handwriting and numerology nightly; "Table Magic" by Drew, Sat., 7 p.m.

GIO'S (7574 Sunset Blvd., 876-1120) Skip E. Lowe's Talent Showcase, nightly.

GROUND FLOOR (Valley Hilton Hotel, 15433 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, (818) 981-0109) Chuck Rowan, Tue.-Thur.; Chuck Rowan Trio, Fri.-Sat.

GROUNDLINGS THEATRE (7307 Melrose Ave., 934-4747) "The All-New Untried Show!", Sunday; supplement comedy-improvisation show, today, 7:30 p.m.; Big Grounding Is Watching," satirical revue, Fri.-Sat., 8:30 p.m.; "Late Show," 10:30 p.m.

HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL (7000 Hollywood Blvd., 469-2442) South Coast Trio, today, 8:30 p.m.; Skip E. Lowe's Talent Showcase, Thur.-Sat., 9 p.m.; Kids Talent Showcase, Sun., 1 p.m.

ICE HOUSE (24 N. Mentor Ave., Pasadena, (818) 681-1923) Music Cabaret: variety showcase, Thur., 9 p.m.

L.A. CABARET (17271 Ventura Blvd., Encino, (818) 501-3737) Today, comedy showcase; Wed.-Thur., free comedy; Fri.-Sat., Super Star comedy, 8:30 and 10 p.m.

LA STRADA (3000 Los Feliz Blvd., 664-2955) "The Streets of the World," Italian, Broadway music and light opera, Tue.-Sun., 8 and 10 p.m.; with Sal Giglio, Tue.-Sat.

L.G.T. VEGAS (11000 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills, 365-9502) Vic Finello, Tue.-Thur., 4:30 p.m.

THE LIMBO LOUNGE (3709 Sunset Blvd., 668-1577) Music and comedy with Sam Diego, Bill Frenzer, Chris Silagy, today, 8 p.m.

LUIGI'S (1739 N. Vermont Ave., Hollywood, 660-9472) Light opera on stage, today; singing waiters and waitresses, Tue.-Wed.; '30s and '40s dancing to the Johnny Rotella Quartet, Thur.; Broadway and pop show tunes, Fri.-Sat., 8 and 10 p.m.

MALDONADO'S (1201 E. Green St., Pasadena, (818) 796-1126) Call club for information.

MANHATTAN (1212 Santa Monica Mall, 451-5511) "Visions," female impersonators' revue, Fri.-Sat., 10 and 11:30 p.m.

MAXI'S CABARET (4711 Sunset Blvd., 665-0937) "Have a Banahnah," an evening of British Music Hall, Fri., 8 p.m.

MISCHA'S (7561 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, 874-3467) Entertainment and dancing nightly, featuring Russian folk music, dance and cuisine; daily, 5 p.m. to 1 a.m.

MOUN OF TUNIS (7445½ Sunset Blvd., 874-3333) Live Moroccan music, today, 6 p.m.; male belly dancers, Mon.-Wed., 6 p.m.; female belly dancers, Thur.-next Sun., 6 p.m.

NEWPORTER (1107 Jamboree Road, Newport Beach, (714) 644-1700) Pianist Confrey Brown, Tue.-Thur., 8:30 p.m., Fri.-Sat., 9 p.m.

NEW YORK COMPANY BAR AND GRILL (2470 Fletcher Drive, 665-1115) "The Christmas Show," Fri.-Sat., 9:30 p.m.

PLAYBOY CLUB (2020 Avenue of the Stars, Century City, 277-2777) Ellis Hall, Fri.-Sat., 8:30 and 11 p.m.; Gwen Braco Show, Mon.-Thur., 8:30 and 11 p.m., Fri.-Sat., 9:30 and 11:30 p.m.; New Deal Rhythm Band, Mon., 9 p.m.

REYNALDO'S CAFE & CABARET (4579 Melrose Ave., 667-1134) Cabaret shows nightly.

ROXY (9009 Sunset Blvd., 204-KIDS) "Let's Put on a Show," children's cabaret, today, 1 p.m.

SARNAS SHOW LOUNGE (10899 Venice Blvd., 839-6197) Barry Fuller Trio, nightly.

SKYLIGHT DINNER THEATRE (21333 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, 373-9601) "Cabaret," 8 p.m., Thur.-Sat.

THE SPORTSMAN'S STEAK AND LOBSTER HOUSE (11500 Washington Blvd., Montebello, 722-5505) Armenian music with Middle Eastern belly-dancing, Tue.-Wed.; Corona Four, Thur.-Sat.

SPORTSMEN'S LODGE RESTAURANT (12833 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, 984-0202) Mitch Greenhill and Mayne Smith, Showcase, Mon.; Jazz Night, Tue.; Cassandra Baker, Fri.-Sat.

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